

COUNTRY

Laerz Airfield

REPORT NO.

OFFIC

Laerz Airfield

EVALUATION see below

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DATE OF CONTENT 30 July to 18 September 1952

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PREPARED 13 October 1952

REFERENCES

PAGES 7 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) 1 - sketch on ditto

REMARKS

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1. The following aircraft and air activity were observed at Laerz airfield between 7 and 31 August 1952:
- 7 August. Local flying started at noon and probably still continued after 10 p.m.
- 8 August. There was local flying between 8:30 a.m. and 10 p.m.
- 9 August. Air activity continued into the night.
- 10 August. At 8:30 a.m., 40 MiG-15 and type-29 planes, 2 biplanes and 1 single-engine, low-wing monoplane were counted at the field.
- 11 August. Night flying started about 7:30 p.m.
- 12 August. A plane towing two sleeve targets, and MiG-15 and type-29 planes in elements of two started flying at 8:30 a.m. The elements of two headed northeast.
- 13 August. Two biplanes and 42 MiG-15 and type-29 planes were counted at the field. There was flying throughout the day and night.
- 14 August. Two MiG-15 and type-29 planes took off at 5 a.m.
- Between 20 and 23 August. There was local flying, but no details could be observed.
- 20 and 24 August. Forty-two MiG-15 and type-29 planes and some other aircraft were parked at the field.
- 25 and 26 August. There was air activity from 8:30 a.m. to noon.
- 27 August. No flights were observed. It was raining.
- 28 August. At 6:20 p.m., 42 MiG-15s, 2 biplanes and 1 high-wing monoplane were counted at the field.
- 31 August. At 11:30 a.m., 36 MiG-15 and type-29 planes, 2 biplanes, 1 high-wing monoplane and 1 single-engine low-wing monoplane with a radial engine were observed at the field.
- 28, 29 and 30 August. There was the usual air activity at the field.
2. On 30 July, three AA guns were observed near the emplacement northeast of the gap in the fence along Vietzen-Laerz road. Several members of the gun crews who stood around the guns were apparently given instruction. At about 9 a.m., about 15 groups each of 6 to 12 men wearing red-bordered black epaulets were observed on the Vietzen-Laerz road between the AA gun emplacement and the road bridge over the Mirow Canal. Some of them had no insignia on their epaulets and the others had two different artillery insignia. After 7 August, only three tents of those near the AA gun emplacement were still there. (1)
3. On 24 July, a wooden plank about 1 meter long with a bundle of wire on top was

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observed on the fence along the Vietzen-Laerz road, about 50 meters south of the point where the fence turns to the northeast. (2) Between the gap in the fence and the northern bend of the fence, a cable, about 2.5 cm in diameter, was observed emerging from the ground near the fence. The cable was laid across the concrete road toward the railroad line and underneath the rails. It appeared that the cable was protected by sheet metal; it was definitely not a rubber cable. A continuation of the cable could not be observed on the western side of Mirow Canal.

4. On 13 August, a soldier was laying a two-wire line in the bushes on the northern side of Mirow Canal between the Vietzen-Laerz road and the railroad line.

5. The aircraft crates were still stored near the fuel dump in mid-August.

6. The old road on the eastern side of the field between the northern barrier and the point just behind the piece of woods was closed up to mid-August. The strip of the Retzow-Kotzow road from Jolly Bridge was still open to civilian traffic. (3)

7. On 9 August, 2 railroad tank cars were observed at Ellerholz railroad station and 7 tank cars on the spur track to the field. On 13 August, the number of tank cars observed included 7 at Ellerholz railroad station and 5 on the spur track to the field.

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8. An additional board fence, 2 meters high and about 25 meters long, was being erected from the southern end of the western fence gap to the board fence along Vietzen-Laerz road. (4) The garage southeast of the new temporary buildings was completed. It had an estimated length of at least 30 meters. Its width corresponded with the length of a motor vehicle.

9. The fence in the Rechlin restricted area was completed. It came from the south extending as far as a point in line with Ellerholz railroad station and continued as a barbed wire fence which was being repaired.

10. On 26 July, [redacted] in Mirow that about 80 EM wearing black-bordered crimson epaulets entered the regular train to Ellerholz. The EM carried their gear and were armed with submachine guns. (5)

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11. [redacted] from residents in Laerz that cleaning work was being done on the 22 concrete hardstands for individual aircraft located in the wooded area of the field along the Retzow-Mirow road, which were formerly used by the German Air Force. (3)

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13. The following observations were made at the field between 5 and 18 September:
- 5 September. At 4 p.m., an alert was sounded, whereupon the MiG-15 and type-29 planes were camouflaged and parked at larger intervals.
- 7 September. Forty-one MiG-15 and type-29 planes, 2 biplanes, 1 single-engine, low-wing monoplane and 1 Pe-2 were counted at the field.
- 12 September 1952. At 7:30 a.m. an alert was sounded in Rechlin. Between 7:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., convoys were observed in Vipperow coming from Vietzen en route to Roebel. The first convoy consisted of 4 trucks, 4 Dodge trucks and 12 tank trucks; the second convoy of 1 radio truck and 4 trucks, the third convoy of 1 truck mounting a searchlight, 1 tank truck, 2 Dodge trucks and 1 bus; and the fourth convoy of 5 trucks, 1 ambulance and 1 radio truck. All the trucks including the Dodge trucks and the bus were occupied by EM who wore black-bordered blue epaulets. At about 10 a.m., many take-offs were made by MiG-15 and type-29 planes in elements of two, heading west. At 5 p.m., 14 MiG-15 were counted at the field.
- 14 September. The convoys returned between 11 a.m. and noon. At 12:30 p.m., 28 MiG-15s, [redacted] with auxiliary fuel tanks, landed at the field. (5)
- 15 September. In the afternoon, there was intensive air activity by formations of MiG-15s over Laerz. At 6:30 p.m., all the dispersal areas at the field were occupied. An estimated additional 24 MiG-15s, camouflaged by fir trees, were parked in the southeastern corner of the taxiway.
- 16 September. At 2:20 p.m., 56 MiG-15s were counted at the field. The camouflage of the aircraft in the southeastern corner of the field was removed. There was no air activity. At 5 p.m., 32 MiG-15 and type-29 planes flew over Mirow heading east. At 5:20 p.m., 28 MiG-15s landed at the field. Additional planes were aloft. At 6:15 p.m., 66 MiG-15s, including 24 under camouflage, were parked at the field.
- 17 September. At 9:50 a.m., seven take-offs in elements of two were made by MiG-15 and type-29 planes. [redacted] these planes had taken off, 54 MiG-15s were observed at the field. The camouflage in the southeastern corner was removed.
- 18 September. At 5:30 a.m., 54 MiG-15s were observed at the field as on the preceding evening. Two biplanes, 1 single-engine, low-wing monoplane and 1 or 2 twin-engine aircraft were also identified at the field. According to local residents, the convoys which were observed on 12 September did not pass through Buchholz. Local residents further said that, during the night of 16 to 17 September, there was intensive traffic by motor vehicles including half-track vehicles, which moved through Roebel en route toward Wittstock.
14. Among the railroad tank cars which arrived at the field in July there were many which had four-axles. (3) In August, 31 railroad tank cars arrived at Ellerholz railroad station. Seven of them came from or went to Finow.
15. In the evening of 26 July, about 80 EM wearing black-bordered crimson epaulets arrived at Ellerholz railroad station on the regular train coming from Mirow. The soldiers marched to the Rechlin restricted area. (5)
16. The following observations were made at the field between 11 August and 5 September:
- 11 August. Between 7 a.m. and 2 p.m., 15 jet fighters, [redacted] made individual flights. (9) There was night flying between 7 p.m. and about midnight.
- 12 August. Individual flights were made between 5 a.m. and 6 p.m. Firing was practiced in Klopzow.
- 13 August. Between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., there was air activity, and firing was practiced in Klopzow.
- 14 August. Between 5 a.m. and 2 p.m., 20 jet planes, [redacted] practiced flying.
- 15 August. Between 7 a.m. and 1 p.m., there was air activity by jet fighters [redacted]
- 16 August. No air activity was practiced. Aircraft observed at the field included 41 jet planes, 4 biplanes and 2 single-engine planes with radial engines. Four jet planes apparently were wrecked.

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18 August. Take-offs in elements of two were made between 6:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

19 August. Between 10 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., there was individual flying by planes including three [redacted]

20 August. Between 8:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., there was flying by seven jet planes.

21 August. Between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. intensive flying was practiced by aircraft including two [redacted] Night flying was practiced by individual planes between 8 p.m. and 1 a.m.

22 August. There was air activity between 7:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. [redacted]

[redacted] Night flying was practiced between 7 p.m. and 2 a.m.

23 August. Between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m., there was air activity by 5 jet bombers.

25 August. Between 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., jet fighters took off in elements of two.

26 August. Between 8 a.m. and 7:30 p.m., take-offs and flights were made in elements of two planes.

27 and 28 August. It was raining. The planes parked at the field were covered with tarpaulins.

29 August. Between 8 a.m. and noon, there was air activity by planes which took off in elements of two. [redacted] observed on four aircraft.

30 August. There was air activity by jet fighters and conventional fighters. [redacted] three MiG-15 and type-29 planes.

A conventional fighter [redacted] and a biplane [redacted]

31 August. There was no air activity.

1 September. Between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., about 20 MiG-15s practiced flying. The planes were fitted with two auxiliary fuel tanks each. They landed with the auxiliary fuel tanks [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

2 September. There was no air activity throughout the day. Sixteen MiG-15s which were not covered with tarpaulins were parked along the edge of the field near the canal. [redacted]

3 September. Between 6:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., there was air activity by about 30 swept-back jet fighters which took off in elements of two. Some of them practiced formation flying. Once, a formation of 11 planes was observed. These planes had taken off in elements of two with small intervals between the individual elements. When flying in formation, there was an interval of one wing span between the individual planes. [redacted]

on seven planes. There were three Yak-11s, including two [redacted]

[redacted] At 3 p.m., 44 MiG-15s, 4 biplanes and 3 Yak-11s were counted at the field.

4 September. Between 8 a.m. and noon, there was air activity by aircraft which took off in elements of two. Formation flying was also practiced. [redacted]

[redacted] on four planes. Between 8:30 and 11 a.m., firing was practiced at a tow target towed by a swept-back jet fighter.

5 September. Between 6 and 10 a.m., flying was practiced by MiG-15s most of which took off in elements of two. Individual and formation flights were made. A formation of 11 planes was once observed.

17. A garage, 51 meters long and 7 meters wide, was under construction about half way between the first and second canal bridge, about 40 meters from the taxiway. The gable of the garage pointed toward the taxiway. The inside height of the garage was 3.6 meters at the entrance and 2.6 meters at the rear. The garage is to hold 16 trucks, mainly tank trucks, radio trucks and trucks for towing aircraft.

18. In late August and early September, construction work was being done on barracks buildings, about 1 meter underground and about 1.5 meters above ground, located near the AA gun emplacements at the field. The buildings were topped with slightly sloping gabled-roofs covered with roofing paper. The billets in the western section of the field were almost completed but apparently not yet occupied because 12 tents were observed nearby. In the vicinity of the newly erected garage between the canal and taxiway there were 10 tents. Just east of these tents, two barracks buildings of an estimated length of 40 meters were under construction. (10)

19. At 4 p.m. on 5 September, an alert was practiced. Shortly after the beginning of this exercise, the German workers had to leave the field, and [redacted]

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the gun crews rushed to the emplacement and began tracking with the AA guns.

- 25X1 20. In early September, 18 large aircraft crates stood on the old storage site on the edge of the woods. (11)

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22. The following air activity was observed at the field between 6 and 30 August:
- 6 August. Between 7:50 a.m. and 4 p.m., flying was practiced by MiG-15s. Twenty-four take-offs in elements of two were observed.
 - 8 August. Between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., there was flying by planes taking off individually and in elements of two.
 - 13 August. Between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., there was air activity by jet fighters.
 - 19 August. Between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., 58 MiG-15 and type-29 planes took off.
 - 21 August. Sixty-three take-offs were made by jet fighters between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.
 - 26 August. There was flying by planes which took off individually and in elements of two. At 9 a.m., four vapor trails were observed at high altitudes, but no aircraft could be seen.
 - 27 August. There was air activity between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.
 - 30 August. Between 7:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., about 30 MiG-15 and type-29 planes were observed aloft.

23. Toward the evening on 16 August, 34 MiG-15 and type-29 planes were counted at the field, and an additional 15 planes were estimated there.

24. The following trucks entered and left the field:

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25. At 7:27 a.m. on 12 September, a siren sounded. At 7:30 a.m., the first vehicles occupied by officers and EN left the barracks installation. At 7:48 a.m., [redacted] heard firing from the field. Individual aircraft flew over the Rechlin area. Between 7:55 and 8:05 a.m., six formations of about five MiG-15s each took off from the field at intervals of two minutes. The aircraft had been parked in formations on both sides of the runway, their noses pointing toward the Rechlin-Munster railroad line. (6)

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Comments.

- (1) It was reported previously that the AA gun batteries had left Laerz airfield, probably to practice firing with live ammunition at the Mustraw artillery range.
- (2) This device, the purpose of which is unknown, is reported for the first time.
- (3) The road was probably blocked because of cleaning work on the war time dispersal areas in the woods east of the field.
- (4) The construction of this additional board fence probably is to secure the extension of the runway and the area south of the east-west runway against observation from the outside, because the fence around the field has a gap there.
- (5) The personnel probably belong to the MGB.
- (6) It is believed that an OATB of the fighter regiment stationed at Laerz airfield was being transferred. From the information that the vehicles moved toward Roebel it may be inferred that the OATB was transferred to Neubrandenburg. The take-off of the Mi3-15 formation on 12 September is connected with the transfer. Since the formation returned to Laerz only on 14 September it must have been serviced meanwhile at another airfield. On 13 September, [redacted] a joint exercise of the two fighter regiments stationed in Laerz and the fighter regiment stationed in Wittstock under the direction of the division headquarters in Laerz. Aircraft number 728 was previously observed only in Wittstock.
- (7) The unusually large number of aircraft indicates that aircraft of other regiments also landed in Laerz in connection with the exercise of the fighter division in Laerz. Most of the aircraft probably came from Wittstock because aircraft of the 15xx series was particularly observed in Wittstock. [redacted] reported that, between 15 and 18 September, the fighter regiments stationed at Puetnitz, Laerz and Wittstock airfields conducted exercises under the direction of the corps headquarters in Wittstock and the division headquarters in Laerz and Puetnitz. These exercises were probably connected with exercises by ground attack units and Soviet Army units in the Rathenow and Doberitz area.
- (8) A four-axle railroad tank car probably has a capacity of 60 cubic meters.
- (9) Of the aircraft [redacted] mentioned, the following are reported for the first time: [redacted]
- (10) [redacted] location of AA gun emplacements and billets for the operating personnel, see Annex.
- (11) The aircraft crates have been stored at this site since late May 1952.

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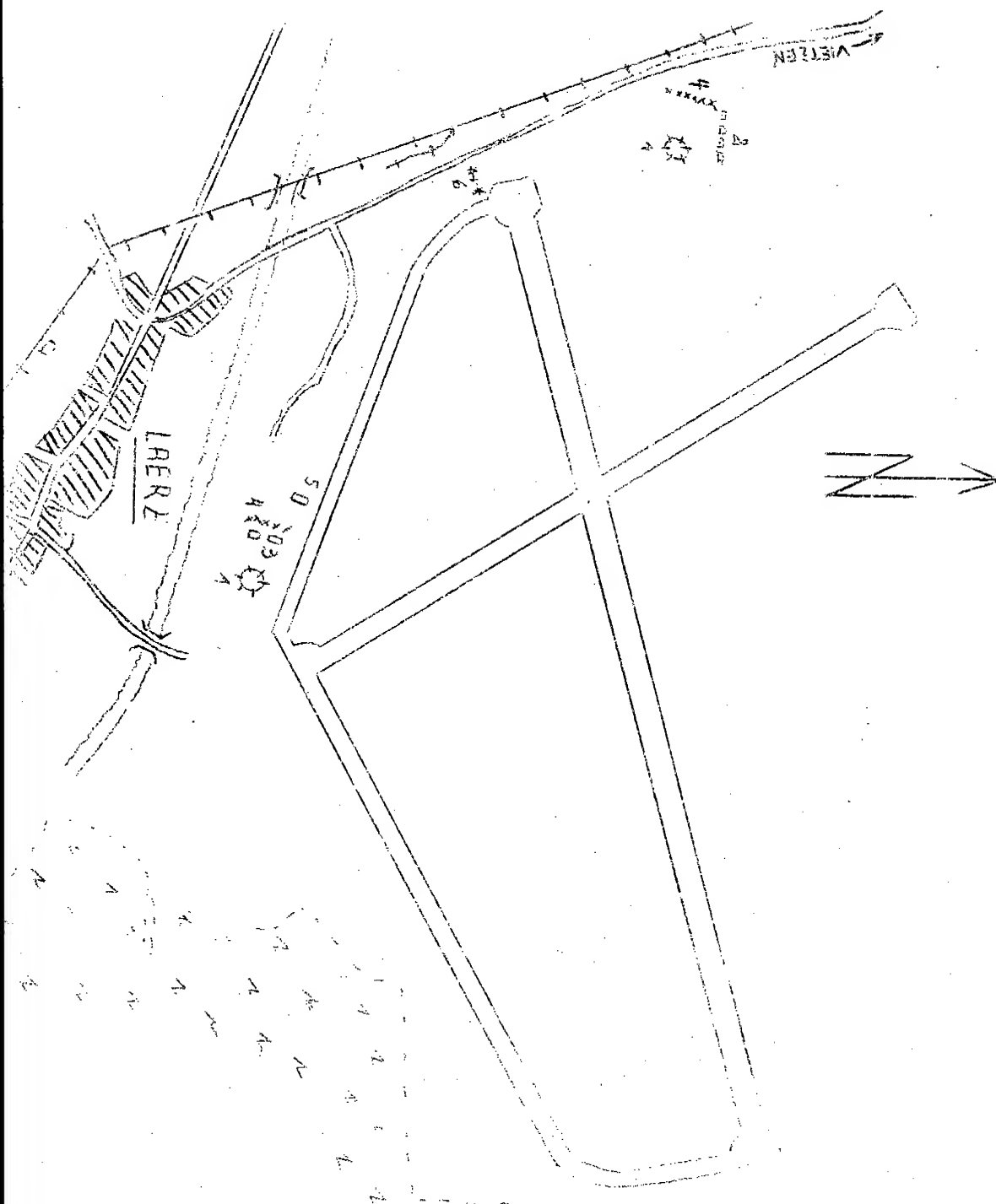
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Location Sketch of AA Gun Emplacements
at Laerz Airfield

Legend:

- 1 Circular gun emplacement with six AA guns; circle about 60 meters in diameter
- 2 Four temporary buildings for gun crews, almost completed
- 3 Two temporary buildings for gun crews under construction
- 4 Tents for gun crews
- 5 New garage
- 6 Additional fence

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